

REGIONAL EQUITY POLICIES

For Discussion

The MSWMAC Demand Management subcommittee identified regional equity as an issue that was not adequately addressed in the Transfer Plan Review Part 2 report. The existing policies and ordinances relating to system equity listed below are included in various county plans and county codes. As a starting point, we will discuss the policies and how they relate to the solid waste system in King County. On the last page of this document are questions to consider for the discussion.

King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

Equity and Social Justice

King County is committed to ensuring that equity and social justice are considered in the development and implementation of policies, programs, and funding decisions. **Equity** is achieved when all people have an equal opportunity to attain their full potential. Inequity occurs when there are differences in well-being between and within communities that are systematic, patterned, unfair, and can be changed. These differences are not random; they are caused by our past and current decisions, systems of power and privilege, policies, and the implementation of those policies. **Social justice** encompasses all aspects of justice, including legal, political, and economic; it demands fair distribution of public goods, institutional resources, and life opportunities.

In solid waste system planning, the division examines ways that we may affect equity and social justice through our programs and services.

Fair distribution of transfer facilities and division resources, such as the community litter cleanup, school education, and green building programs, helps ensure that everyone has access to services that create safer and healthier communities.

CHAPTER 2 Solid Waste System Planning

PL-5 Incorporate principles of equity and social justice into solid waste system planning.

CHAPTER 7 Solid Waste System Finance

FIN-8 Subject to approval from the Metropolitan King County Council, define customer classes and establish equitable fees for each customer class based on services provided, benefits received, use of the system, and the costs, incurred or avoided, of providing those services.

FIN-9 The fee charged to customer classes will be the same at all facilities, unless the Metropolitan King County Council determines a change in the rate structure is appropriate.

2012 County-wide planning policies – amended and adopted October 31, 2015

CHAPTER: Public Facilities and Services

Solid Waste

King County and the entire Puget Sound region are recognized for successful efforts to collect recyclable waste. Continuing to reduce and reuse waste will require concerted and coordinated efforts well into the future. It is important to reduce the waste stream going into area landfills to extend the usable life of existing facilities and reduce the need for additional capacity.

PF-13 Reduce the solid waste stream and encourage reuse and recycling.

Siting Public Capital Facilities

While essential to growth and development, regional capital facilities can disproportionately affect the communities in which they are located. It is important that all jurisdictions work collaboratively and consider environmental justice principles when siting these facilities to foster the development of healthy communities for all.

PF-20 Site or expand public capital facilities of regional or statewide importance within the county in a way that equitably disperses impacts and benefits and supports the Countywide Planning Policies.

King County Comprehensive Plan

Executive Recommended 2016 King County Comprehensive Plan Update

CHAPTER 9 Services, Facilities and Utilities

G. Essential Public Facilities

The region will work cooperatively to site essential public facilities in an equitable manner. Essential public facilities are defined in the Growth Management Act and include large, usually difficult to site facilities such as prisons, solid waste facilities, wastewater facilities, and airports.

F-210a When siting new county facilities, ensure that county agencies identify and evaluate impacts on the “determinants of equity” for low-income communities, people of color, and people with limited English speaking abilities.

F-221a The King County Equity Impact Review Tool should be used to prioritize funding and service delivery in cases where the failure to meet projected service needs would negatively and/or disproportionately impact low-income communities, people of color, and people with limited English speaking abilities.

F-226 Proposed new or expansions to existing essential public facilities should be sited consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan. Listed existing essential public facilities should be preserved and maintained until alternatives or replacements for such facilities can be provided.

F-227 King County and neighboring counties, if advantageous to both, should share essential public facilities to increase efficiency of operation. Efficiency of operation should take into account the overall value of the essential public facility to the region and the county and the extent to which, if properly mitigated, expansion of an existing essential public facility located in the county might be more economical and environmentally sound.

F-228 King County should strive to site essential public facilities equitably so that no racial, cultural, or socio-economic group is unduly impacted by essential public facility siting or expansion decisions. No single community should absorb an inequitable share of these facilities and their impacts and an assessment of existing facilities should be conducted when siting new facilities. Siting should consider equity, environmental justice and environmental, economic, technical and service area factors and communities with a disproportionate share of existing facilities should be actively engaged in the planning and siting process for new facilities. The net impact of siting new essential public facilities should be weighted against the net impact of expansion of existing essential public facilities, with appropriate buffering and mitigation. Essential public facilities that directly serve the public beyond their general vicinity shall be discouraged from locating in the Rural Area.

F-229 A facility shall be determined to be an essential public facility if it has one or more of the following characteristics:

- a. The facility meets the Growth Management Act definition of an essential public facility;
- b. The facility is on a state, county or local community list of essential public facilities;
- c. The facility serves a significant portion of the county or metropolitan region or is part of a countywide service system; or
- d. The facility is the sole existing facility in the county for providing that essential public service.

F-230 Siting analysis for proposed new or expansions to existing essential public facilities shall consist of the following:

- a. An inventory of similar existing essential public facilities in King County and neighboring counties, including their locations and capacities;
- b. A forecast of the future needs for the essential public facility;
- c. An analysis of the potential social and economic impacts and benefits to jurisdictions and local communities receiving or surrounding the facilities;
- d. An analysis of the proposal's consistency with policies F-226 through F-229;
- e. An analysis of alternatives to the facility, including decentralization, conservation, demand management and other strategies;
- f. An analysis of economic and environmental impacts, including mitigation, of any existing essential public facility, as well as of any new site(s) under consideration as an alternative to expansion of an existing facility;
- g. Extensive public involvement which effectively engages communities so that no racial, cultural, or socio-economic group is excluded; and
- h. Consideration of any applicable prior review conducted by a public agency, local government, or citizen's group; and
- i. To the extent allowable under the Growth Management Act, the locational criteria in policy R-326.

(R-326 Except as provided in R-327:a. New schools and institutions primarily serving rural residents shall be located in neighboring cities and rural towns;

b. New schools, institutions, and other community facilities primarily serving urban residents shall be located within the ((UGA)) Urban Growth Area; and

c. New community facilities and services that primarily serve rural residents shall be located in neighboring cities and rural towns, with limited exceptions when their use is dependent on a rural location and their size and scale supports rural character.)

J. Solid Waste

F-269 King County shall operate a transfer system that is dispersed throughout the county to ensure access to safe, reliable, efficient, and affordable solid waste services, and improves recycling opportunities for all residents and businesses.

F-271b The King County Equity Impact Review Tool should be used to identify and assess the impacts of proposed service changes on low-income communities, people of color, and people with limited English speaking abilities.

KCC Title 10

10.08.030 Acquisition of solid waste disposal facilities. The county may acquire by purchase, lease, contract with private parties or other necessary means, solid waste facilities that are needed for disposal of solid waste generated and collected in King County and other jurisdictions with which a solid waste interlocal agreement exists. Selection of the solid waste facilities shall be

consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan and all federal, state and local requirements, including, but not limited to, comprehensive land use planning, fire protection, water quality, air quality and the consideration of aesthetics. To the extent practicable, solid waste facilities shall be located in a manner that equalizes their distribution around the county, so that no single area of the county will be required to absorb an undue share of the impact from these facilities. More than one alternative must be considered and evaluated in the siting of planned solid waste facilities. The county may acquire solid waste facilities on a continuing basis, as is required by the volume of solid waste generated and collected within the county. (Ord. 15912 § 6, 2007: Ord. 8891 § 9, 1989: Ord. 8069, 1987: Ord. 7708 § 1 (part), 1986).

Questions for discussion:

1. Are there policies or words in policies that are right on target (or at least going in the right direction) with your idea of equity?
2. Are there policies or words in policies that seem contrary (or going in the wrong direction) with your idea of equity?
3. What, if anything, is not addressed in these policies related to impact, service or social equity?
4. Do any terms need to be defined better?
5. Are there any discrepancies among the policies that need to be reconciled?
6. Have any cities developed equity policies that we should be considering?